



Florence County Health Department

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The Basic Steps to Food Safety at Home During the Holidays

Florence, WI –

Foodborne illnesses get millions of people sick each year. Illnesses from food can cause you to feel like you have the flu and for some individuals, it can cause serious health problems or even death. Everyone can get sick from eating contaminated food and keep in mind, symptoms vary from person to person even if they ate the same meal. The concentration of pathogens varies in each serving of food and/or water. People that are at higher risk are pregnant women, older adults, and those with certain health conditions such as cancer, diabetes, kidney disease, and HIV/AIDS.

The Florence County Health Department would like to remind the public to follow these four basic steps to make sure you are preparing food safely at home this holiday season:

1. **CLEAN:** Always wash your food, hands, counters, and cooking utensils and equipment.
 - Rinse fruits and veggies with water. Not recommended to use soap, bleach solutions, disinfecting products or commercial produce wash.
 - Wash your hands in warm soapy water for at least 20 seconds before and after touching food.
 - Wash your cutting boards, utensils, and counters with hot soapy water before and after each food item.
 - Clean the lids of canned goods before opening.
2. **SEPARATE:** Keep raw foods separated from other foods during storage and preparation. Germs can spread from one food item to another.
 - Do not reuse marinades used on raw foods unless you bring them to a boil.
 - Use a special cutting board or plate for raw meats only.
3. **COOK:** Foods need to get hot and stay hot. Heat kills germs.
 - Cook to safe temperatures:
 - ✓ Roasts of Beef, Pork & Lamb – 145 °F
 - ✓ Seafood, Shellfish, Fish, Eggs, Steaks & Chops – 145 °F
 - ✓ Ground meat, injected and mechanically tenderized meat - 155°F
 - ✓ Ground Beef, Pork, Lamb, Seafood– 155 °F

✓Turkey, Chicken, Duck and wild game – 165 °F

- Use a food thermometer to make sure that food is done. You can't always tell by looking.
4. **CHILL:**
- 2-Hour Rule: Put foods in the fridge or freezer within 2 hours after cooking or buying from the store.
 - The safe cold hold food temperature is 41°F or below.
5. **THAW:**
- Never thaw food by simply leaving out on the counter.
 - Thaw food safely in the fridge, under cold running water, or in the microwave.
 - Marinate foods in the fridge.

By following these five simple rules, your family and guests will enjoy a delicious and safely prepared meal this holiday. For more information, please visit www.datcp.wi.gov. Contact the Florence County Health Department at 715.528.4837 or visit 501 Lake Ave. in Florence, Wisconsin Monday thru Thursday 8:30am to 4:00pm.

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